

# News

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## WHAT'S NEW ON RAPA NUI

### Hospital update

(As reported on [easterislandnews.blogspot.com](http://easterislandnews.blogspot.com); photographs courtesy of Kathi Merritt). After years of relying on basic medical facilities, the Chilean Government fulfilled a long-running commitment to the island to construct a state-of-the-art hospital for the residents of and visitors to Rapa Nui. President Sebastián Piñera visited the island for the first time since taking office, and officially opened the new hospital in October 2012. Specialized treatments will still require traveling to Santiago, but many more people will now be treated locally. Additionally, there is a small local department focusing on traditional Rapanui alternative medicine. The new hospital is located on Simon Paoa, at the same site as the former hospital, but now covers a much larger area and also includes housing for medical staff.



### First language institute opens on Easter Island

(As reported on [easterislandnews.blogspot.com](http://easterislandnews.blogspot.com)). The Instituto de Idiomas y Capacitaciones (INICAP), or Institute for Languages and Further Education, has opened on Easter Island; the event was celebrated with

a traditional *umu tahu*. Instruction began in August 2013, with course offerings in English, French, and the Rapanui language, all taught by Rapanui teachers. Courses will also be offered to train Rapanui youth to work as tour guides on the island, as well as courses to help those who wish to open small businesses.

### Visiting 'Orongo and Rano Raraku

(As reported by Kathi Merritt). Passes to visit the sites of 'Orongo and Rano Raraku can no longer be purchased on site and must be bought in advance at either the airport or at the CONAF office. The cost is \$60 USD; once the pass is used for the first time, it is good for 5 days thereafter. The Mata Ngarau petroglyph precinct at 'Orongo is completely off-limits to visitors while conservation strategies are being planned (Photo courtesy of Kathi Merritt).



### Cousteau's reforestation dreams to become a reality

(As reported on [www.cousteau.org](http://www.cousteau.org) and [www.20minutos.es](http://www.20minutos.es)). Many years ago, Jacques Cousteau had a dream to reforest Rapa Nui after traveling to the island and being inspired by its natural beauty, while at the same time being greatly concerned about the dangers posed by erosion of the landscape. He referred to Rapa Nui as being like a small planet in the middle of the universe. In April 2013, The Cousteau Society, the Government of Chile, and Rapa Nui representatives signed an historic agreement to commit to the reforestation of eroded lands on Rapa Nui.

The agreement marks the launch of a collaborative project of eight years involving the Cousteau Society, CONAF, the local authorities of Rapa Nui, and the Corporation for Easter Island Development (CODEIPA). At the core of the project is the restoration of the ecosystem support provided by healthy forests in order to recreate, in specific parts of the island, an

ecosystem as close as possible to what it might have been when the first people arrived on Rapa Nui.

The creation of a working group was one of the first stages of the project. A steering committee was established that includes Francine Cousteau, President of the Cousteau Society; Eduardo Vial, Executive Director of CONAF; and Aida Baldini, Forest Manager at CONAF. The committee put together a technical team and provided guidelines. The team is composed of a multidisciplinary group of Chilean and foreign professionals and will be responsible for the implementation of various activities. CONAF will be responsible for the technical aspects of reforestation and soil restoration, and the Cousteau Society will be responsible for activities related to environmental education, communication, and awareness at local, national, and international levels. Vial noted that the activities on the island will help to reach a balance that will benefit not only the environment, but also the local community. Francine Cousteau added that one of the fundamental pillars for the success of this project is to raise awareness and educate the local community and the thousands of visitors who come to Rapa Nui, attracted by its natural and cultural beauty. An international campaign has been launched to raise funds for the effort. Cousteau emphasized the importance of protection and sustainable management of the landscape, not just for tourism activities, but also for future food security for the islanders on both the land and in the surrounding ocean.

### Other news of interest

Kathi Merritt reports that the roads to both 'Orongo and Ahu Akivi have been paved. The soccer field at the corner of Avenida Policarpo Toro and Avenida Te Pito o te Henua is being remodeled. Planting of native vegetation on Poike is taking place with the help of CONAF and SAG as part of an ongoing anti-erosion project.

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE MAPSE

### Apuntes del Museo newsletter released

MAPSE has begun publication of a digital newsletter, *Apuntes del Museo*. The first issue was published in late 2012. Articles may be submitted in English or Spanish. The first issue contains articles by Brigid Mulloy, *Bill Mulloy, The Backstory*; Cristián Moreno Pakarati, *Soldados Rapanui en la Guerra Pacífico? Estudio Preliminar*; José Miguel Ramírez Aliaga, *Confirmado: Exploradores Polinesios Llegaron al Sur de Chile, Hace Unos Mil Años*; Jimena Ramírez González & Camila Zurob Dreckmann, *La Administración Civil*

*en Isla de Pascua*; and Ana Maria Arredondo, *Historia de la Educación en Isla de Pascua; Primera Parte 1864 – 1956*. Anyone wishing to receive the newsletter can request a copy through the MAPSE website at: <http://www.museorapanui.cl/Biblioteca/newsletter.html>

### MAPSE events

In March, the William Mulloy Library at the MAPSE hosted the launch of the new book *Vistiendo Rapa Nui*, edited by Andrea Seelenfreund of Universidad de Chile; the book was presented by textile artist Clara Alarcón Pakarati and Ana Maria Arredondo, Professor of History. In May, the Día del Patrimonio Cultural, Te Ono te Kainga, the Ancestors of Rapa Nui, was celebrated with a full day of activities including guided tours of the museum and the William Mulloy Library for both tourists and locals. It also featured an underwater photo exhibition, *Mata Ika*, and a presentation by the Escuela de Música Infantil de Rapa Nui. In August, a Día del Niño at the Centro Cultural Tongariki was held and included a photographic exhibition prepared by the children with the assistance of their parents and the MAPSE staff. There was also a presentation by environmental biologist Lua Alvas from the Universidad de Chile to promote awareness about the historical value of the island's natural resources, to highlight current environmental problems, and to offer alternatives to help with these issues.

## WHAT'S NEW IN OCEANIA

### Newly renovated Pacific Hall re-opens at Bishop Museum

On September 21, 2013, the permanent exhibition space of Pacific Hall (formerly Polynesian Hall) re-opened at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Hawai'i after a major multi-million dollar renovation that took nearly four years to complete. The hall showcases objects from the museum's cultural and archaeological collections, many of which were recovered from archaeological sites across the Pacific by Bishop Museum archaeologists. The permanent exhibition features thirteen objects from Rapa Nui, including stone fishhooks, an obsidian *mata'a*, and various wooden objects, including a *rapa* (dance paddle), a *reimiro*, and a *rongorongo* tablet.

### Pacific Photo Archive launched

Based in Vanuatu, the Pacific's first photographic and media agency, Waka Photos, has been launched and provides access to thousands of colorful images depicting various island cultures of the Pacific. Photo